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[From the National Era.]

THE SYCAMORES.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

In the outskirts of the village,
On the river's winding shores,
Stand the Occidental plane-trees,
Stand the ancient sycamores!

One long century hath been numbered,
And another half-way told,
Since the rustic Irish gleeman
Broke for them the virgin mould.

Deftly set to Celtic music,
At his violin's sound they grew,
Through the moonlit eves of summer,
Making Amphion's fable true.

Rise again, thou poor Hugh Talent!
Pass in jerkin green along,
With thy eyes brim full of laughter,
And thy mouth as full of song.

Pioneer of Erin's outcasts,
With his fiddle and his pack;
Little dreamed the village Saxons
Of the myriads at his back.

How he wrought with spade and fiddle,
Delved by day and sang by night,
With a hand that never wearied,
And a heart forever light—

Still the gay tradition mingles
With a record grave and drear,
Like the rollick air of Cluny,
With the solemn march of Mear.

When the box-tree, white with blossoms,
Made the sweet May woodlands glad,
And the Aronia by the river
Lighted up the swarming shad,

And the bulging nets swept shoreward,
With their silver-sided haul,
Midst the shouts of dripping fishers,
He was merriest of them all.

When, among the jovial huskers,
Love stole in at Labor's side,
With the lusty airs of England,
Soft his Celtic measures vied.

Songs of love and wailing lyke-wake,
And the merry fair's carouse;
Of the wild Red Fox of Erin,
And the woman of Three Cows.

By the blazing hearths of Winter,
Pleasant seemed his simple tales,
Midst the grimmer Yorkshire legends,
And the mountain myths of Wales.

How the souls in Purgatory
Scrambled up from fate forlorn,
On St. Keven's sackcloth ladder,
Slyly hitched to Satan's horn.

Of the fiddler who in Tara
Played all night to ghosts of kings;
Of the brown dwarfs, and the fairies
Dancing in their moorland rings!

Jolliest of our birds of singing,
Best he loved the bob-o-link.
"Hush!" he'd say, "the tipsey fairies!
Hear the little folks in drink!"

Merry-faced, with spade and fiddle,
Singing through the ancient town,
Only this, of poor Hugh Talent,
Hath Tradition handed down.

Not a stone his grave discloses;
But, if yet his spirit walks,
'Tis beneath the trees he planted,
And when Bob-o-Lincoln talks!

Green memorials of the gleeman!
Linking still the river shores,
With their shadows, cast by sunset,
Stand Hugh Talent's sycamores!

When the Father of his Country
Through the north-land riding came,
And the roofs were starred with banners,
And the steeples rang acclaim—

When each war-scarred Continental,
Leaving smithy, mill, and farm,
Waved his rusted sword in welcome,
And shot off his old King's-arm—

Slowly passed that august Presence
Down the thronged and shouting street;
Village girls, as white as angels,
Scattering flowers around his feet.

Midway, where the plane-tree's shadow
Deepest fell, his rein he drew;
On his stately head, uncovered,
Cool and soft the west wind blew.

And he stood up in his stirrups,
Looking up and looking down,
On the hills of Gold and Silver,
Rimming round the little town—

On the river, full of sunshine,
To the lap of greenest vales,
Winding down from wooded headlands,
Willow-skirted, white with sails.

And he said, the landscape sweeping
Slowly with his ungloved hand,
"I have seen no prospect fairer
In this goodly Eastern land."

Then the bugles of his escort
Stirred to life the cavalcade;
And that head, so bare and stately,
Vanished down the depths of shade.

Ever since, in town and farm-house,
Life hath had its ebb and flow;
Thrice hath passed the human harvest
To its garner, green and low.

But the trees the gleeman planted,
Through the changes, changeless stand;
As the marble calm of Tadmor
Mocks the desert's shifting sand.

Still the level moon at rising
Silvers o'er each stately shaft;
Still beneath them, half in shadow,
Singing, glides the pleasure craft.

Still beneath them, arm-enfolded,
Love and Youth together stray;
While, as heart to heart beats faster,
More and more their feet delay.

Where the ancient cobbler, Keezar,
On the open hill-side wrought,
Singing, as he drew his stitches,
Songs his German masters taught—

Singing, with his gray hair floating
Round his rosy, ample face;
Now a thousand Saxon craftsmen
Stitch and hammer in his place.

All the pastoral lanes so grassy,
Now are Traffic's dusty streets;
From the village, grown a city,
Fast the rural grace retreats.

But, still green, and tall, and stately,
On the river's winding shores,
Stand the Occidental plane-trees,
Stand Hugh Talent's sycamores!

[Concluded from last week.]

Sketch of the Life of Handel.

From An Account of the Handel Commemoration in
Westminster Abbey, in 1784.

BY CHARLES BURNET, MUS. DOC., F. R. S.

Handel remained eight or nine months in Ireland, where he extended his fame, and began to repair his fortune. At his return to London, in the beginning of 1742, as he had relinquished all thoughts of opposing the present managers of the opera, former enmities began to subside; and, when he recommenced his Oratorios at Covent-Garden, the Lent following, he found a general disposition in the public to countenance and support him. "Samson" was the first he performed this year, which was not only much applauded by the crowded houses in the capital, but was soon disseminated, in single songs, throughout the kingdom; and, indeed, it has ever been in the highest favor of all his Oratorios, except the "Messiah," which this season, to the honor of the public at large, and disgrace of cabal and faction, was received with universal admiration and applause. And from that time to the present, this great work has been heard in all parts of the kingdom with increasing reverence and delight; it has fed the hungry, clothed the naked, fostered the orphan, and enriched succeeding managers of Oratorios, more than any single musical production in this or any country.

This Sacred Oratorio, as it was at first called, on account of the words being wholly composed of genuine texts of Scripture, appearing to stand in such high estimation with the public, Handel, actuated by motives of the purest benevolence and humanity, formed the laudable resolution of performing it annually for the benefit of the Foundling Hospital, which resolution was constantly put in practice, to the end of his life, under his own direction; and, long after, under that of Mr. Smith and Mr. Stanley. In consequence of these performances, the benefactions to the charity from the year 1749 to 1759, by eleven performances under Handel's own direction, amounted to £6935 00

From 1760 to 1768, by eight performances under the conduct of Mr. John Christian Smith,	1332
From 1769 to 1777, nine performances under that of Mr. Stanley,	2032
	£10,299

The organ in the chapel of this hospital was likewise a present from Handel; and he bequeathed, as a legacy to this charity, a fair copy of the original score of the "Messiah."

From the time of his quitting Ireland, with little opposition, and a few thin houses, in consequence of great assemblies of the nobility and gentry, manifestly and cruelly collected together on his nights of performance, with hostile intentions, by some implacable remains of his most powerful adversaries, he continued his oratorios till within a week of his death.*

But though the oratorio of the "Messiah" increased in reputation every year, after his return from Ireland, and the crowds that flocked to the theatre were more considerable every time it was performed; yet, to some of his other oratorios, the houses were so thin, as not nearly to defray his expenses; which, as he always employed a very numerous band, and paid his performers liberally, so deranged his affairs, that in the year 1745, after two performances of "Hercules," January 5th and 12th, before the Lent season, he stopped payment. He, however, resumed the performance of his oratorios of *Samson*, *Saul*, *Joseph*, *Belshazzar*, and the *Messiah*, in March; but I perfectly remember, that none were well attended, except *Samson*, and the *Messiah*†.

His late majesty, king George the Second, was a steady patron of Handel during these times, and constantly attended his oratorios, when they were abandoned by the rest of his court.‡

Handel, late in life, like the great poets, Homer and Milton, was afflicted with blindness; which, however it might dispirit and embarrass him at other times, had no effect on his nerves or intellects, in public; as he continued to play concertos and voluntaries between the parts of his oratorios to the last, with the same vigor of thought and touch, for which he was ever so justly renowned. To see him, however, led to the organ after this calamity, at upwards of seventy years of age, and then conducted towards the audience to make his accustomed obeisance, was a sight so truly afflicting and deplorable to persons of sensibility, as greatly diminished their pleasure, in hearing him perform.

During the oratorio season, I have been told, that he practised almost incessantly; and, indeed, that must have been the case, or his memory uncommonly retentive; for, after his blindness, he played several of his *old organ concertos*, which must have been previously impressed on his memory by practice. At last, however, he rather chose to trust to his inventive powers, than those of reminiscence: for, giving the band only the skeleton, or ritornels of each movement, he played all the solo parts extempore, while the other instruments left him, *ad libitum*: waiting for the signal of a shake, before they played such fragments of symphony as they found in their books.

Indeed, he not only continued to perform in

public after he was afflicted with blindness, but to *compose* in private; for I have been assured, that the duet and chorus in "Judas Maccabeus," of *Zion now his head shall raise, Tune your harps to songs of praise*, were dictated to Mr. Smith, by Handel, after the total privation of sight. This composition, so late in life, and under such depressing circumstances, confirms an opinion of Dr. Johnson, "that it seldom happens to men of powerful intellects and original genius, to be robbed of mental vigor, by age; it is only the feeble-minded and *fool-born* part of the creation, who fall into that species of imbecility, which gives occasion to say that they are *superannuated*: for these, when they retire late in life from the world on which they have lived by retailing the sense of others, are instantly reduced to indigence of mind." Dryden, Newton, Dr. Johnson himself, and our great musician, are admirable illustrations of this doctrine. Indeed, Handel not only exhibited great intellectual ability in the composition of this duet and chorus, but manifested his power of invention in extemporaneous flights of fancy to be as rich and rapid, a week before his decease, as they had been for many years. He was always much disturbed and agitated by the similar circumstances of "Samson," whenever the affecting air in that oratorio of: *Total Eclipse, no Sun, no Moon, &c.*, was performed.

The last oratorio at which he attended, and performed, was on the 6th of April, and he expired on *Friday* the 13th, 1759, and *not on Saturday* the 14th, as was at first erroneously engraved on his monument, and recorded in his life; I have indisputable authority for the contrary: as Dr. Warren, who attended Handel in his last sickness, not only remembers his dying before midnight, on the 13th, but, that he was sensible of his approaching dissolution; and having been always impressed with a profound reverence for the doctrines and duties of the Christian religion, that he had most seriously and devoutly wished, for several days before his death, that he might breathe his last on *Good-Friday*, "in hopes, he said, of meeting his good God, his sweet Lord and Savior, on the day of his resurrection," meaning the third day, or the Easter Sunday following.

The figure of Handel was large, and he was somewhat corpulent, and unwieldy in his motions; but his countenance, which I remember as perfectly as that of any man I saw but yesterday, was full of fire and dignity; and such as impressed ideas of superiority and genius. He was impetuous, rough, and peremptory in his manners and conversation, but totally devoid of ill-nature or malevolence; indeed, there was an original humor and pleasantry in his most lively sallies of anger or impatience, which, with his broken English, were extremely risible. His natural propensity to wit and humor, and happy manner of relating common occurrences, in an uncommon way, enabled him to throw persons and things into very ridiculous attitudes. Had he been as great a master of the English language as Swift, his *bon mots* would have been as frequent, and somewhat of the same kind.

Handel, with many virtues, was addicted to no vice that was injurious to society. Nature, indeed, required a great supply of sustenance to support so huge a mass, and he was rather epicurean in the choice of it; but this seems to have been the only appetite he allowed himself to gratify.*

* The late Mr. Brown, leader of his majesty's band, used to tell me several stories of Handel's love of good cheer, liquid and solid, as well as of his impatience. Of the former he gave an instance, which was accidentally discovered at his own house in Brook street, where Brown, in the oratorio season, among other principal performers, was at dinner. During the repast, Handel often cried out: "Oh,—I have de taught;" when the company, unwilling that, out of civility to them, the public should be robbed of anything so valuable as his musical ideas, begged he would retire and write them down; with which request, however, he so frequently complied, that, at last, one of the most suspicious had the ill-bred curiosity to peep through the key-hole into the adjoining room; where he perceived that *deceit* was only bestowed on a fresh hamper of *Burgundy*, which, as was afterwards discovered, he had received in a pres-

When Pope found that his friends, Lord Burlington and Dr. Arbuthnot, thought so highly of Handel, he not only lashed his enemies in the *Dunciad*, but wished to have his *Eurydice* set to music by him. Mr. Belchier, a common friend, undertook to negotiate the business; but Handel having heard that Pope had made his Ode more lyrical, that is, fitter for music, by dividing it into airs and recitatives, for Dr. Green, who had already set it; and whom, as a partisan for Bononcini, and confederate with his enemies, he had long disliked, says: "It is de very ding vat my *pellows-plover* has set already for ein tocktor's teecree at Cambridge."*

When Gluck came first into England, in 1745, he was neither so great a composer, nor so high in reputation, as he afterwards mounted; and I remember when Mrs. Cibber, in my hearing, asked Handel what sort of a composer he was; his answer, prefaced by an oath, was, "He knows no more of contrapunto, as mein cook, Waltz."

But though he was so rough in his language, and in the habit of swearing, a vice then much more in fashion than at present, he was truly pious, during the last years of his life, and constantly attended public prayers, twice a day, winter and summer, both in London and Tunbridge.

At the coronation of his late majesty, George the Second, in 1727, Handel had words sent to him, by the bishops, for the anthems; at which he murmured, and took offence, as he thought it implied his ignorance of the Holy Scriptures: "I have read my Bible very well, and shall chuse for myself." And, indeed, his selection of the words: *My heart is inditing of a good matter*, was very judicious, and inspired him with some of the finest thoughts that are to be found in all his works. This anthem was sung at the coronation, while the peers were doing homage.

He knew the value of time too well to spend it in frivolous pursuits, or with futile companions, however high in rank. Fond of his art, and diligent in its cultivation, and the exercise of it, as a profession, he spent so studious and sedentary

ent from his friend, the late Lord Radnor, while his company was regaled with more generous and spirited port.

Another anecdote which I had from Brown, was the following: When the late Reverend Mr. Felton found that his first organ concertos were well received, he opened a subscription for a second set, and begged of Brown to solicit Mr. Handel's permission to insert his name in the list. Brown, who had been in great favor with Handel the winter before, when he led his oratorios, remembering how civilly he had been attended by him to the door, and how carefully cautioned, after being heated by a crowded room and hard labor, at the rehearsals in Brook street, not to stir without a chair, had no doubt of his success: but upon mentioning to him Felton's request, as delicately as possible, one morning when he was shaving, by telling him that he was a clergyman, who being about to publish some Concertos by subscription, was extremely ambitious of the honor of his name and acceptance of a book, merely to grace his list, without involving him in any kind of expense; Handel, putting the barber's hand aside, got up in a fury, and, with his face still in a lather, cries out with great vehemence: "Tamm your self, and go to der teiffel—a barson make Concerto! why he no make sarmon?" &c. In short, Brown seeing him in such a rage, with razors in his reach, got out of the room as fast as he could, lest he should have used them in a more *barbarous* way than would be safe. Indeed, he had a thorough contempt for all our composers at this time, from Dr. Green down to Harry Burgess; and performers on the organ too: for, after being long an inhabitant of this country, he used to say: "When I came hither first, I found, among the English, many good players, and no composers; but now, they are all composers, and no players."

* Dr. Green took his degree at that University in 1730. Indeed, on Handel's first arrival in England, from Green's great admiration of this master's manner of playing, he had sometimes literally condescended to become his *bellores-blower*, when he went to St. Paul's to play on that organ, for the exercise it afforded him, in the use of the pedals. Handel, after the three o'clock prayers, used frequently to get himself and young Green locked up in the church together; and, in summer, often stripped into his shirt, and played till eight or nine o'clock at night. Dr. Green, previous to his admission into St. Paul's, as a chorister, was taught to sing by the late Mr. Charles King; he was afterwards bound apprentice to Brind, the organist of that cathedral, and was, at the time alluded to by Handel, either still an apprentice, or, at least, a very young man, and deputy to the organist, whom he afterwards succeeded.

* The last season of Handel's personal attendance and of his life was remarkably successful. One of my friends, who was generally at the performance of each oratorio that year, and who used to visit him after it was over, in the treasurer of the theatre's office, says, that the money he used to take to his carriage of a night, though in gold and silver, was as likely to weigh him down and throw him into a fever, as the copper money of the painter Coreggio, if he had had as far to carry it.

† In 1749, *Theodora* was so very unfortunately abandoned, that he was glad if any professors, who did not perform, would accept of tickets or orders for admission. Two gentlemen of that description, now living, having applied to Handel, after the disgrace of *Theodora*, for an order to hear the *Messiah*, he cried out: "Oh your servant, Mein-herren! you are tannaple tainty! you would not co to *Theodora*—der was room enough to tance dere, when dat was perform."

Sometimes, however, I have heard him, as pleasantly as philosophically, console his friends, when, previous to the curtain being drawn up, they have lamented that the house was so empty, by saying: "Nevre moind; de moosic vil sound de petter."

‡ About this time a *bon mot* of Lord Chesterfield's was handed about by a nobleman, still living, who going one night to the Oratorio at Covent-Garden, met his lordship coming out of the theatre. "What! my lord, are you dismissed? Is there no oratorio to-night?" "Yes, says his lordship, they are now performing; but I thought it best to retire, lest I should disturb the king in his *privacies*."

a life, as seldom allowed him to mix in society, or partake of public amusements. Indeed, after my first arrival in London, 1744, he seldom was absent from the benefit for decayed musicians and their families; and I have sometimes seen him at the playhouses, the opera, and at St. Martin's church, when the late Mr. Kelway played the organ. But those who were more intimately acquainted with him than myself, say, that in his later years, except when he went to pay his duty to the royal family at St. James's, or Leicester-House, he seldom visited the great, or was visible, but at church, and the performance of his own oratorios.

Besides seeing Handel, myself, at his own house, in Brook street, and at Carlton-House, where he had rehearsals of his oratorios, by meeting him at Mrs. Cibber's, and, at Frasi's, who was then my scholar, I acquired considerable knowledge of his private character, and turn for humor. He was very fond of Mrs. Cibber, whose voice and manners had softened his severity for want of musical knowledge. At her house, of a Sunday evening, he used to meet Quin, who, in spite of native roughness, was very fond of music. Yet the first time Mrs. Cibber prevailed on Handel to sit down to the harpsichord, while he was present, on which occasion I remember the great musician played the overture in *Siroe*, and delighted us all with the marvellous neatness with which he played the jig, at the end of it. Quin, after Handel had gone, being asked by Mrs. Cibber, whether he did not think Mr. Handel had a charming hand? replied: "a hand, madame! you mistake, it's a foot." Poh! poh! says she, has he not a fine finger?" "Toes, by G—, madame!" Indeed, his hand was then so fat, that the knuckles, which usually appear convex, were like those of a child, dented or dimpled in, so as to be rendered concave; however, his touch was so smooth, and the tone of the instrument so much cherished, that his fingers seemed to grow to the keys. They were so curved and compact, when he played, that no motion, and scarcely the fingers themselves, could be discovered.

At Frasi's, I remember, in the year 1748, he brought, in his pocket, the duet of "Judas Macabæus," *From these dread Scenes*, in which she had not sung when that oratorio was first performed, in 1746. At the time he sat down to the harpsichord, to give her and me the time of it, while he sung her part, I hummed, at sight, the second, over his shoulder; in which he encouraged me, by desiring that I would sing out—but, unfortunately, something went wrong, and Handel, with his usual impetuosity, grew violent: a circumstance very terrific to a young musician. At length, however, recovering from my fright, I ventured to say, that I fancied there was a mistake in the writing; which, upon examining, Handel discovered to be the case: and then, instantly, with the greatest good humor and humility, said: "I pec your barton—I am a very odd to—Maishter Schmitt is to plame."

When Frasi told him that she should study hard, and was going to learn thorough-bass, in order to accompany herself: Handel, who well knew how little this pleasing singer was addicted to application and diligence, says, "Oh—vaat may we not expect!"

Handel wore an enormous white wig, and, when things went well at the oratorio, it had a certain nod, or vibration, which manifested his pleasure and satisfaction. Without it, nice observers were certain that he was out of humor.

At the close of an air, the voice with which he used to cry out, Chorus! was extremely formidable indeed; and, at the rehearsals of his oratorios at Carleton-House, if the Prince and Princess of Wales were not exact in coming into the music-room, he used to be very violent; yet, such was the reverence with which his Royal Highness treated him, that, admitting Handel to have had cause of complaint, he has been heard to say: "Indeed, it is cruel to have kept these poor people, meaning the performers, so long from their scholars, and other concerns." But if the maids of honor, or any other female attendants, talked during the performance, I fear that our modern Timotheus not only swore, but called names; yet,

at such times, the Princess of Wales, with her accustomed mildness and benignity, used to say: "Hush! hush! Handel's in a passion."

Handel was in the habit of talking to himself so loud, that it was easy for persons not very near him, to hear the subject of his soliloquies. He had, by much persuasion, received under his roof and protection, a boy, who had been represented not only as having an uncommon disposition for music, but for sobriety and diligence: this boy, however, turned out ill, and ran away, no one, for a considerable time, knew whither. During this period, Handel walking in the park, as he thought, alone, was heard to commune with himself in the following manner: "Der teifel! de fater vas desheevd; de mutter vas desheevd; but I vas not desheevd; he is ein t—d sheauntrel—and coot for nutting."

Handel's general look was somewhat heavy and sour; but when he *did* smile, it was his sire the sun, bursting out of a black cloud. There was a sudden flash of intelligence, wit, and good humor, beaming in his countenance, which I hardly ever saw in any other.

It has been said of him, that out of his profession he was ignorant and dull; but though I do not admit the fact, yet, if the charge were as true as it is severe, it must be allowed, in extenuation, that to possess a difficult art in the perfect manner he did, and to be possessed by it, seems a natural consequence; and all that the public had a right to expect, as he pretended to nothing more. Accomplishments can only amuse our private friends, and ourselves, in leisure hours; but so occupied and absorbed was Handel, by the study and exercise of his profession, that he had little time to bestow, either on private amusements, or the cultivation of friendship. Indeed, the credit and reverence arising from these, had Handel possessed them, would have been transient, and confined to his own age and acquaintance; whereas the fame acquired by silent and close application to his professional business,

—Nec Jovis ira, nec ignes,

Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vultus.

And it is probable that his name, like that of many of his brethren, will long survive his works. The most learned man can give us no information concerning either the private life or compositions of Orpheus, Amphion, Linus, Olympus, Terpander, or Timotheus, yet every school boy can tell us that they were great musicians, the delight of their several ages, and, many years after, of posterity.

Though totally free from the sordid vices of meanness and avarice, and possessed of their opposite virtues, charity and generosity, in spite of temporary adversity, powerful enemies, and frequent maladies of body, which sometimes extended to intellect, Handel died worth upwards of twenty thousand pounds; which, except one thousand to the fund for decayed musicians and their families, he chiefly bequeathed to his relations on the continent.

His funeral was not public, like that of Rameau, in France; of Jomelli, in Italy; or of our Dryden and Garrick, in England; yet, when he was buried in Westminster-Abbey, April the 20th, 1759, the Dean, Dr. Pearce, Bishop of Rochester, assisted by the choir, performed the funeral solemnity. More general and national testimonies of regard were left to the present period, when all enmities, jealousies, and operations of envy were subsided; and when time, examination, and reflection, had given new charms and importance to his works. And this pleasing task has been performed in a way so ample, magnificent and honorable, that it will be difficult to find, either in ancient or modern history, a more liberal and splendid example of gratitude to a deceased artist, in any other country.

[From the New York Tribune]

Popular Songs.

Whoever has studied the works of Hogarth with the precision which their excellence requires, will remember the ballad-singers chanting in a corner, or loud-mouthed at an execution, or

proclaiming hoarsely through the mob a naval or military victory. Englishmen and Americans have been put into a common category by the *dilettanti* of music. It is said that we go to the opera, at ridiculously high prices, only to applaud in the wrong places; only to show off the dresses of our wives, sisters and daughters; only, in a general way, to make fools of ourselves. Perhaps this may be true. We may not be skillful in detecting and incontinently hissing a tenor who flats in B, or a soprano who sharps in C. We do not take off our shoes and throw them over our heads, as Tuscan virtuosos are said to do, in the ecstasy produced by a perfect cadenza. But that we are not wholly indifferent to the Muses—that we are not absolutely incapable of appreciating rhythm, melody and harmony—that the Anglo-Saxon and the Anglo-American has some "music in his soul," (whether of the strident or the liquid kind we say not)—that even here upon our barbarous shores, if not the shell of Mercury, at least the pipes of Pan are welcome—let the innumerable and ever-grinding organs of the street, let the hundred thousand piano-fortes of the Republic, let the Pierian sodalities, the societies which claim Handel, Haydn, Beethoven and Mendelssohn as their godfathers, the Academies, the insolvent Opera-Houses, and the grimy choirs of African Minstrels attest! And above all, (if we may offer cumulative evidence), let the cheap and humble sheets, which, fluttering from the iron rails of the Park or of Trinity, afford a modicum of meat to breechless boys, which are sold for a penny and cost less—let these bear witness to the inherent and everlasting appetite of man, whether of lofty or of low estate, for a rhymed epic of events, for a melodious expression of human experience and of earthly vicissitude, for a measured enunciation of the grotesqueness of the hour, for a song, either by a poet or poetaster, to the immortal love, heroism or domesticity of the ages. We may be at fault in comprehending the sinuosities of a score, and quite out in our *majors* and *minors*, but we would not exchange the profound reverence with which a Yorker receives "Lilly Dale," or "Woodman Spare that Tree," or "The Old Folks at Home," as, in some sort, a stammering utterance of his best hopes and sweetest reminiscences, for all the sensuous and deliquescent raptures of southern shores.

What a song is, and by what rules it should be constructed, remains to this day an unsolved and inscrutable problem. Horace, with all his art poetical, would have been puzzled to say by what method he composed "*Nunc est bibendum*," the most joyous and fascinating of Latin melodies. Of all singers, it may best be said of the song-singer that he is born and not made. These harmonists of the heart are always bustling upon us like angels, without the drill of colleges or drum of discipline. From the Ayrshire cottage of Burns, from the garret of Carey, from the printing-house of Beranger, from shrinking women and from unlettered men, come the melodies which fasten themselves upon the life of the world. The song is written, nobody knows how or when or where. Often, like the *Marseillaise*, it is the accident of an accident. Often, like a little foundling, it ventures into the earth without paternity, and first winning, by its honest humanity, the affection of the street or the cottage, wails its way to the affection of the palace. Poor Howard Payne, sitting in the lonesome London chamber, hard at work by manufacture, and adaptation, and Heaven knows by what other resources, constructing his "Maid of Milan" for a manager greedy of novelties, feels some old thoughts come over him of Boston or New York, and of boyish triumphs there, marries his "Home, Sweet Home" to a Sicilian air, and the world catches the complaint of his home-sick heart, and will sing it for a century. A young lawyer in Philadelphia is asked for a song by an actor whose benefit night does not promise to be of the most lucrative; he dashes off "Hail Columbia!" and to this day he is charmed by glee singers, played by brass bands, and whistled upon the fore-castles of ships sailing about Cape Horn. We remember that Prof. Wilson undertook to

prove—we think in one of the "Noctes"—that Tom Moore could not write a song; yet there is no land upon this globe that has not listened to "Oft in the Stilly Night," "Mary's Tears," and "There's Nothing True but Heaven."

The song floats into existence a priceless waif, a most opulent estray, an anonymous donation, a love-gift of the modest and kindly, to the kind and retiring. The masses, taking up the cheerful carol or the minor plaint, seldom inquire whose master-hand struck the key-note of their unfathomed erudition. How many gallant tars, roaring out "The Bay of Biscay," know who wrote it? How many grim-whiskered soldiers, singing with unusual tears "Annie Laurie," in the trenches of Sevastopol, have heard of the pure-hearted woman whose white hand first wrote "Maxwelton braes are bonnie?" The singer of songs must be content to find in his vocation "its own exceeding great reward." Not less, however, should be our gratitude toward those who have cheered our loneliness, elevated our hopes or assuaged our grief.

The song is especially the property of the people. It is pleasant, therefore, and encouraging to find that the taste of the people inclines to the decorous, the chaste and the affectionate, and eschews the coarse, the ribald and the heartless. Of a dozen ballads purchased of a hawkster yesterday, we found but one which might not be sung by a modest woman. A recapitulation of the titles will at once recall to the reader the character of these productions. We have "Annie Laurie," "Ellen Bayne," "Song of the Farmer," "The Dying Californian," "Willie, we have Missed You," "Jeannie with the Light-brown Hair," "Cheer, boys, cheer," and "Let us Speak of a Man as we find Him"—productions of widely differing poetical merit, but all of them honest and true in their sentiment and decorous in their expression. Nor do we discover in those which are designedly grotesque any unpardonable violation of taste.

We are inclined to believe that in this kind of street commodity, New York is entitled to a precedence of London. The songs of the metropolis of Great Britain—we mean, of course, those vended by the peripatetic dealers—are usually nothing but unfortunate doggerel. We remember one which was especially a favorite with bold Britons during the late war, and in which the Emperor of Russia was most disrespectfully alluded to. A couplet occurs to us in which it is asserted, of the potentate before mentioned, that for him

"The English digged a h—ll of a hole,
And buried him deep in Sevastopol."

We do not, as a people, relish such stuff as this. We like songs that are spirited, heroic, plaintive, affectionate and funny; but even the Ethiopian minstrels have tuned us to something better than sheer slang and buffoonery. In conclusion, we may parody the wish of Goethe, and trust, "while our poets sing," that "some good genius may save them all" from the low, the meretricious and the debasing.

The "Don Giovanni" Legend.

(From the Opera Box, London, June 6)

The revival of *Il Don Giovanni*, which has long been anticipated as the crowning event of the season, is now definitely fixed for next week. The splendor and correctness of the decorations, and the introduction of several airs hitherto omitted, will endow this *chef d'œuvre* with a character entirely new, so the revival may be regarded as a sort of musical festival in honor of Mozart. While the public mind is looking forward to the production of this great work, a few words respecting the legend of Don Juan, and the dramatic phases through which it passed before it was stamped as the chief glory of the lyrical stage, will not be inappropriate. Don Juan Tenorio belonged to one of the twenty-four illustrious houses of Seville. One night he killed the Commandada Ulloa, whose daughter he had previously carried off; and the murdered man was buried in a Franciscan convent, where his

family held a chapel. The friars having decoyed Don Juan into their convent, and deprived him of life, spread the report that he had insulted the statue of his victim, which, by way of retaliation, had plunged him into the infernal regions. This is the entire tradition, which is so exceedingly meagre, that notorious as the name of Don Juan may have been in his own country for several centuries, his fame can scarcely be said to have had a definite shape till he was brought upon the stage. If, as some suppose, he was an intimate friend of Pedro the Cruel, King of Castile, something like two centuries and a half must have elapsed before he became a theatrical figure, for the monk, Gabriel Tellez, who wrote under the name of "Tirso de Molina," lived from about 1570 to 1650. Molina's play is entitled "El Burlado de Sevilla y Convidado de Piedra," and was fortunate enough to attract the attention of some itinerant Italian actors, who took it into France. In one of the suburbs of Paris an Italian modification of the Spanish piece was performed, and seems to have inspired Molière with the idea of his celebrated *Festin de Pierre*, which was first performed in 1665, at the Theatre of the Palais-Royal, though it may be observed that a French drama, on the same subject, written by Villiers, and entitled *Le Festin de Pierre, ou le Fils Criminel*, had been performed in 1659, at the Hotel de Bourgogne. Two other French versions, one by the actor Dumesnil, the other by Thomas Corneille, followed that of Molière at short intervals. The English tragedy, entitled *The Libertine*, written by Shadwell, celebrated as the object of Dryden's satire, seems first to have introduced the subject to the London public. It was first played at Dorset Gardens in 1676.

Fortunately, Goldoni found no imitators; but in a ballet, to which the music was composed by Gluck, and the date of which is about 1765, the old terrible catastrophe is preferred to the prosaic modification. The Statue comes to sup with Don Juan; Don Juan goes to sup with the Statue; and then comes the retribution, as in the early dramatic version. An Italian opera, composed by Vincenzo Righini, about twelve years afterwards, is exactly on the same principle. The music to this work is entirely forgotten. Last in the series of dramatists is Lorenzo da Ponte, who was born in 1749, and died in 1838, at New York, where he was director of the Italian Opera. He had so highly pleased Mozart by his libretto of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, which he wrote in 1786, that in the following year he was asked by the great composer for another work, which now exists in that of the immortal *Il Don Giovanni*. By this *chef d'œuvre* all the previous versions of *Don Juan*, both musical and dramatic, are eclipsed, and as the *Faust* of Goethe is now the *Faustus par excellence*, so is the *Don Giovanni* of Mozart the only acknowledged form of the Spanish libertine.

Between these earlier versions of the Juan story and the libretto of Mozart's opera, written by Da Ponte, there is a difference with respect to the catastrophe. In the former the divine retribution does not visit Don Juan when the Statue, in compliance with his invitation, comes to sup with him; but the Libertine is invited to return the visit, and it is in a scene, in which the Statue is the host and he is the guest, that his destruction takes place. Two of the versions, Dumesnil's and Shadwell's, give the Libertine a pair of friends, who share his fate when the Statue's visit is returned. Da Ponte, on the other hand, destroys the Libertine without going through the formality of a second festival. However, the celebrated Goldoni, who, in the course of the last century, wrote an Italian play on the subject, entitled "Don Giovanni Tenorio, ossia il Dissoluto punito," had departed so much from the original legend, that Da Ponte's book, in spite of minor differences, may be regarded as a return to the old story. With a prosaic veneration for probability, Goldoni omits all the supernatural agency that gives the tale its peculiar coloring. Don Juan does indeed sup with the Commander, but it is before the death of the latter; the Statue, too, is introduced, but it is a mere stone image, that remains fixed in the churchyard, where Don Giovanni is struck dead by a flash of lightning.

The comic servant, who is called "Catalinon" by Tirso de Molina, "Arlecchino" by the old Italian, "Sganarelle" by Molière, "Jacomo" by Shadwell, and who afterwards revives in the "Leporello" of Da Ponte, is likewise left out in Goldoni's latter production.

From my Diary, No. 6.

JUNE 18.—The papers are talking about a chime of bells for the city of Lowell. A *Peal* of bells, gentlemen, a *peal*. Talking of a chime of bells, is like speaking of a tune of organ-pipes, or a melody of piano-forte strings. Chimes are the sounds produced by a *peal* of bells, when rung according to certain rules. All good English authorities agree in their use of the terms. See Robert Southey's Doctor, for instance, chap. xxxi, et seq.

The idea of having a *peal* of bells, and consequently of having chimes of an evening, and thus rendering real to us the allusions with which the whole body of English poetry is full, is certainly very pleasant; but is it certain that the result of the experiment will not be merely the infliction of a chronic nuisance upon the neighborhood in which the *peal* is placed, with no corresponding gratification to people farther off? I happen to have made this matter a subject of study and observation for a long time; I have listened hours to the music from a belfry in which the bells, ranging in size from one of 16,000 pounds to a little one of 15 inches in circumference, number *ninety-nine*—and I, on the other hand, have thanked my stars, when I heard that same old choral hammered slowly from the dozen bells in the Parochial Church in Kloster street, Berlin, that I did not reside in that part of the city.

It is a pleasant thing to have a piano-forte in a house; but suppose the only use made of it was to drum out simple melodies with one finger, and that you were condemned to bear this half an hour every evening after tea. About the third Sunday we should find your prayer-book improved thus: "From famine, pestilence, from sudden death, and from our piano-forte, Good Lord, deliver us." The 'Ding-dong-dinging' of psalm tunes and simple airs, without harmonies, is but another form of the piano-forte nuisance, and this I take to be the real reason why, in England, *peals* of bells are devoted almost exclusively to the ringing of changes. With a *peal* of six, eight, or ten bells, it is clear that all attempts at harmonies would be absurd, and 'change ringing' is therefore the most available means of bringing out the richness and variety of the *peal*.

I am surprised to find how few persons are aware that every bell gives out two or three distinct notes; that the sound of a bell in fact is, instead of a single tone, a regular chord. I suppose there is not a bell in the country in the sound of which two tones are not perfectly distinguishable to the ear. If now, say four large bells tuned to each other, are put into one of our low church steeples, and struck in order, we have not only a succession of the fundamental notes of the bells, but of the harmonies also. Rapid ringing gives us a singular involved mass of musical tones. Make the number of bells eight and ring a tune; your melody is there, but clothed in an arabesque of harmonies. Now at a proper distance the effect of this is not unpleasant, at least for a time, as in case of a piece of fire-work you must not be too near.

A *peal*, then, might be a delightful neighbor to us, did it hang high up in a lofty old English church tower, standing in the vacant space of the church grounds, which, hung in yonder church steeple directly on the street, and not more than fifty or sixty feet from the earth, would soon prove a nuisance.

I have not much faith in anything we shall be likely to do at present in the way of *peals* of bells, for we have neither church towers suitable nor societies of change ringers, though these might be formed.

I do wish, however, that we could have in the United States one such set of bells as constitute the "Carillon" of Belgium and Holland. One at Amsterdam has forty-two bells. That at Antwerp ninety-nine. How large that at Bruges is I do not know.

These are furnished with a key board, and can be played like a gigantic organ. Tunes—nay *symphonies* are played upon that at Antwerp, by clock work.

If ever the idea should arise of erecting a monument in commemoration of one of the most important events of the Revolution, as yet "unhonored and unsung," I mean Washington's assumption of the command of the American armies on Cambridge common, my design for that structure should be a campanile or bell tower, with a carillon worthy the name. There are not many large cities in our country which would not gladly contribute their bell to the "Washington Carillon."

JUNE 21.—Turning over a file of the "Voss'sche Zeitung," a daily Berlin paper, which I took during the winter of 1855-6, I find Rellstab's account of the centennial celebrations of Mozart's birth. I will quote one or two historic notices from the article, after a word or two upon the writer.

Ludwig Rellstab, whose bluff, burly figure, large, gray head, full, round face, ornamented with a small Thackeray nose, is to be seen at every first-class concert in Berlin, was born in that city, in April, 1799. His father was something of a composer, but better known as a writer upon music; still better as a music publisher. Before the close of the last century, he had added a large retail business and musical circulating library to his establishment, and had prepared a large hall in his house for private concerts. He died in 1813. A daughter, Caroline, (born in 1786, died in 1814), was quite a distinguished singer.

No bright intelligent boy, with a strong taste for music, and a natural turn for literary composition, could be placed in circumstances better adapted to foster and develop his talents, than was Ludwig, the son of the music publisher, Rellstab. He knew all the distinguished musical people of Berlin, and who visited that capital, and gathered up an immense fund of anecdotes and interesting notices of the great men who were still living or had just passed from the stage. Mendelssohn he knew from boyhood, intimately. Weber consulted him about the *Euryanthe* text, and under his advice many of its absurdities were pruned by Frau von Chezy. As the text now stands, the catastrophe is ridiculous. But as it was too late to alter it, Rellstab advised Weber to have the curtain rise during the overture, and present a tableau to the audience, which should give the key to the plot. This struck Weber favorably, and the passage in which the violins are muted was written with this object in view; but though the music was retained, the tableau was never presented. Rellstab had long negotiations with Weber about writing him an opera text, but the composition of *Oberon*, and the death of the composer, put an end to the project.

About 1823-4, Rellstab went to Vienna, and I find in the conversation books that he had negotiations with Beethoven also, upon the subject of a text. These also came to nothing.

As early as 1825, Rellstab appeared as the author of *Sagen und Romantische Erzählungen*, (Legends and romantic tales), which were honorably received at a time when Hoffmann, Fouqué and Achim von Arnim were pouring forth their productions from the press. In fact, for nearly forty years, Rellstab has been before the German public as a writer of tales, sketches, poems, criticisms, and indeed of works in all departments of lighter literature. In his articles upon concerts, he often gives the reader carefully prepared historical notices of the music, to which his own personal recollections, or those of men whom he knew in his youth, add a peculiar charm. These articles may also be considered good historical authority. Hence I think the following, upon Mozart's *Are Verum Corpus*, worth translating.

The *Are Verum Corpus*, which, as performed by the Domchor, made so deep an impression upon the audience, was in fact composed at Potsdam, during Mozart's stay here, [Berlin], and in that city in 1789, at the time he visited these cities, Dresden and Leipzig, in company with his pupil, Count Lichnowsky. The particulars in regard to the composition of the *Are Verum*, are thus related: he was invited to dine with the father of our present oldest and most worthy pianoforte teacher, Türschmidt, also known as the excellent hornist of the royal orchestra. The conversation turned upon church music, and its use in sustaining the services of the church, and Mozart spoke with

great animation for its employment in the manner of the Catholic Church. He suddenly sprang up, called for music paper, and seated himself at a table to write; the conversation at once ceased, in order not to disturb him, but he called out good-naturedly in his Austrian dialect: "Talk away, that don't disturb me, only no one must sing or utter even a single tone." And so in the midst of the conversation, he wrote in an incredible short time that wonderful piece of music, which he handed to the company with the words: "There you have something that will suit your church!"

Of this availability of his talent, which was ready at every moment to enable him to write with a rapidity and certainty bordering upon the magical, there are many examples. For instance, there is the story in Nissen's Biography, of his composition of the double canon at Leipzig, at the moment of his taking leave of Cantor Doles. Herr André, now in Berlin, (Feb. 1856), with so many rare MSS. of Mozart, has among them one beautiful song, on which is written in Mozart's own hand: "Written at Vienna, in the room of Herr R., on the Landstrasse." During the period above mentioned, April and May, 1789, Mozart was several times in Berlin. At one time he put up in the then noted hotel, "Zur Stadt Paris," in the Brüderstrasse, probably on occasion of a longer visit than usual, and his room was one which is now visited daily by hundreds, as it is now the public room of the confectioner, Stchely.

Speaking of the supper in honor of Mozart's birthday, Rellstab adds: "At the table, a fac simile of Mozart's hand was passed round, containing two humorous impromptus, the celebrated *O du Eselhafter Martin*, and the well known *Lectu difficile*. Numberless, sometimes rather hard, but always good-natured, jokes of this kind, full of spirit and musical fun, were thrown off by Mozart. For instance, the *Venerabilis barba Capucinorum*. A very musical gentleman, who sat by me, said he possessed twelve such comical canons by Mozart. Ought not these to be published?"

Musical Correspondence.

PHILADELPHIA, JUNE 19.—The German Opera Troupe closes its season of eight nights to-morrow evening. Four operas have been produced—*Der Freischütz*, "The Mason and Locksmith," (Auber), *Fidelio*, and Flotow's *Martha*. *Fidelio* was the best and most successful performance; it was given entire, including the final scene of the release of the prisoners in the Market Place. On both representations it was received with the utmost enthusiasm, Mme. JOHANNSEN having three calls before the audience, and bouquets in proportion. The company gives perfect satisfaction as far as it goes. The chorus and orchestra are much better than those attached to the Italian Opera Company, and are thoroughly under BERGMANN'S command; he is highly esteemed here as a conductor. Owing to the very inclement weather, and the excitement of the great German Festival, the opera has not been so well attended as it would have been, although it has been profitable to the management. However, it has given so much pleasure, that arrangements have been made for its return next season, and several thousand dollars have been subscribed for the importation of a first bass, baritone, contralto and soprano to strengthen the ensemble, and ensure the production of such operas as *Don Giovanni*, the *Zauberflöte* and *Euryanthe*.

This is a step in the right direction, and shows how general is the feeling in Philadelphia to support the Opera House, through all hazards, no matter in what language the music is given.

The *Suengerfest* was largely attended. The choral concert was given on Monday, in the Academy. Eleven hundred singers were on the stage, and gave grand effect to Luther's Choral: *Ein feste Burg*; the other selections were very indifferently rendered by the whole body, though the pieces given by the

separate societies were well sung. The palm was won by the "Orpheus Club," of Boston, the members of which sang a Serenade with immense applause, receiving an encore and plenty of bouquets. The other encore of the evening was bestowed upon the New York Societies, who sang a "Rhine Song" admirably. The deputations from Baltimore and Philadelphia did themselves no credit at all. The orchestra was large, with a small host of charming violin bows, but it was weak in basses—having but five contras and six 'celli; likewise was it much in need of good conducting—Bergmann should have had the desk and baton, and then the overture to *Egmont* and Weber's "Jubilee" would have been taken in correct *tempi* instead of being drawn out like dead marches. Musically speaking, then, the Choral Concert was a comparative failure, in consequence of a want of care in the rehearsals, and of interest in the programme. The dollar seats were thronged, so were the cheap places aloft; but the \$1 50 chairs were but sparsely occupied, compared to the appearance of the Academy on Opera nights.

The tenor, FRAZER, formerly of the SEGUINS, is giving *Ballad Soirées* at the Musical Fund Hall, to very good audiences. It is said that he is about to enter the field in Philadelphia as a teacher of singing, and that he will preside over the music of one of the fashionable churches. It is to be hoped that this is true, for the sake of our Oratorio Concerts during the coming season. With BISHOP and FRAZER, the Harmonia, or whatever Society secured the services of these five vocalists, could take the lead in sacred concerts.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, JUNE 27, 1857.

Music of the Week.

ITALIAN OPERA.—The last of the series of nine performances, not one of which it is said has paid expenses, took place at the Boston Theatre on Friday evening of last week. Certainly there was enough of merit in the performances to deserve better success, although the selections were for the most part hacknied, the new opera of *La Traviata* being in fact anything but new to those familiar with the other works of Verdi. The *Traviata* twice, the *Trocatore* twice, and one representation each of *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Lucia*, *Linda*, *Il Barbiere*, and finally *L'Elisir d'Amore*, make on the whole a pretty beggarly account. Decidedly we give the preference to the lighter part of the list, to the two comic operas last mentioned. But Rossini's "Barber" was treated as of small account; for one good performance of that we would willingly sit through all the others. Next to that, for free and happy play of fancy, for ready flow of musical invention, for piquancy and brilliancy, of all the strictly comic operas which we are allowed to hear upon our stage, give us this early work of Donizetti, the picturesque, sparkling, delightful little comedy of "The Elixir of Love." It is full of beautiful music, of the kind light as air, not fraught with any weight or depth of meaning, not leaving any lasting impression, but exceedingly fascinating and refreshing for the moment. It is a very enjoyable little opera, at least to one who does not crave tragical intensities and horrors, or care to be stormed and startled by the effective climaxes of the fashionable Verdi school. But it is natural enough perhaps; romantic youth loves tragedy,

years for excitement, while longer experience of the real tragedy of life is grateful for the merrier scintillations of genius, for the exquisite summer fancies and heat-lightnings of the brain. Any true lover of Art, however, will be sure to learn, sooner or later, that the most playful freaks, the lightest fancies of real imaginative genius, are worth more than the most serious sentimentality wedded to the most intensely tragic plots of third-rate minds. And sometimes a man will develop sparks of genius, of true inventiveness, in sport, who cannot get beyond sentimental common-place, or over-strained and false effects, when he devotes himself to the illustration of a serious subject.

The *Elisir d'Amore* was performed whilome in Boston with Madame LABORDE as Adina, who could execute the florid music with sure mechanical precision, but had little other charm. Much more fascinating in it about four years since was Madame SONTAG, at the Howard Athenæum, assisted by POZZOLINI, ROCCO, &c. We may have heard some others, but surely no one who so completely gave us the zest and sparkle and witchery of the part, both as singer and as actress, as did Madame GAZZANIGA on that Friday evening. She was indeed the feature of the operatic season; the one fresh, really interesting thing, the one addition to our stock of artistic experiences worth cherishing, and not easily exhaustible, was this charmingly unique manifestation of the true lyric faculty in her. We have told how it has steadily grown upon us in music and in characters so widely different as the Violetta, the Lucrezia Borgia, and the unsophisticated Linda. The freshness and naturalness of this last was even surpassed in her impersonation of the intelligent, coquettish, but good-hearted peasant girl Adina, who plays with her bashful lover, till in his despair he buys the quack elixir, trusting to whose virtues he exults with a new courage, which is all he ever wanted to win the hearts of all the village maidens, so that she in turn is jealous, and thus caught in her own trap. Charmingly she looked it, acted it and sang it. There was exquisite vivacity and subtlety, and true artistic, refined accent, coloring and shading in all her little fragments of coquettish recitative. The duets with her lover, and especially that with the quack doctor, were admirable on her part. The latter was encored, and evidently her more potent elixir, of her eyes and voice:

La ricetta è il mio vicino,
In quest'occhi è l'elisir,

worked upon the Doctor, Sig. ASSONI, to the inspiring of his best *ris comica*; the thing was a complete success. Her voice wins its way into our best feelings, for it has a character of innocence and purity, as well as of remarkable freshness for her age, (the Countess di MALESPINA, which is her married name, is said to be over thirty, although in looks, in voice, in vivacity and naturalness of action she appears so girlish); it is a voice full of sunshine from within, the heart's sunshine, and therefore not simply bright and hard, but easily touched with emotion and sensitively true to every coloring of pathos. The intelligence, innocence and frankness of her face conspired with such a voice to make a fascinating Adina. The lady's blonde complexion and features seem more German than Italian; who can tell her history? In the rendering of the music

there were no noticeable defects, or what there were were overlooked in higher graces of expression. The music of the whole opera was much abridged; and it was better to omit than to mar, at least in a composition of this character, where it is only so much more or less of a certain sort of musical delectation, of which you do not weigh the several moments; the whole is very pleasant, no part very valuable. Mme. GAZZANIGA may have wisely evaded vocal passages beyond her easy execution; no one missed them; but in this case the plot itself was made to suffer by apparent hurry to get through.

Signor BRIGNOLI, though his voice at first betrayed some weariness after the nightly exertions of a whole week, seemed more alive and natural in Nemorino than we had seen him before. He sang all the music sweetly and expressively, especially the love-sick strain in the last act: *Una furtiva lagrima*, his rendering of which was full of pathos, and his tones exceedingly beautiful. The magical elixir, too, appeared to quicken in him quite an unexpected comic vein, in the exulting *larà, larà*. Sig. ASSONI made a most amiable, amusingly grotesque, and cunningly persuasive Dr. Dulcamara; one could forgive him all his quackeries, he did them with such a queer grace, and because his pretended elixir did so successfully operate to quicken into life the sparkling and pretty comedy. Sig. COLETTI was the vain and dashing sergeant; he gave the music faithfully, but it is too florid for a bass of his thick quality.

New Publications.

(From Oliver Ditson & Co.)

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On Monday evening a specimen of the first three months' progress of the school was afforded to an invited company, at the rooms of Messrs. Hallett, Davis & Co. The performances were highly promising, but not of course fair theme for criticism. It was gratifying to find that music of so high an order had been made material for practice.

The *Kyrie* and *Gloria* of Beethoven's Mass in C, were sung in a manner that showed careful study, by a choir of thirty or forty voices; also one or two of Mendelssohn's four-part songs. A couple of young ladies sang one of Mendelssohn's two-part songs; and there were creditable solos, such as *Robert, Robert*, Beethoven's *Adelaide*, &c. A Sonata duo, not a very difficult one, for piano and violin, was well played by a young lady and gentleman. Mr. Baker conducted, and Mr. Parker played the accompaniment upon a grand piano. Of course there was much that was crude about all this; but why may not the experiment, if duly cherished, grow up into the Conservatoire of which the need is constantly expressed?

Musical Chat-Chat.

It is telegraphically stated that Herr Ullman has made arrangements with M. Calzado, manager of the Italian Opera in Paris, for four months' services of Mme. FREZZOLINI, who will commence to sing at the New York Academy of Music about the 1st of Sept. It is also rumored that the new lessees of the Academy (Messrs. Thalberg and Ullman) are likely to bring over Mr. Lumley's troupe to New York in the winter, including the famous tenor, GIUGLINI, the prima donna, SPEZIA, &c..... Fitzgerald's *City Item*, Philadelphia, tells us:

Gazzaniga, Brignoli and Amodio have been re-engaged by Maretzek for a season of nine months from next September. A new Soprano, Contralto, Tenor and Bass will be added to the troupe. Overtures have been made to Madame Lagrange for the whole of this season. This large and splendid troupe will sing only in Philadelphia, Boston and Havana.

Others foresee no such fine privileges for Boston, but, reasoning from the poor patronage extended to the Opera during this last brief visit here, and from the inglorious flight of Maretzek, hint of punishment in store for us,—that henceforth these melodious showers will all pass wide of Boston, and make us very envious, while they refresh our neighbors. The

loss of *Trovatore*, *Rigoletto*, &c., is one that real friends of music can well bear, nor will the public taste in their opinion grow the worse for it; but we trust it is not yet fully demonstrated that we support no opera.....Philadelphia is certainly just now the Western paradise of opera-singers. The German opera have had encouragement to prolong their engagement through this week. *Fidelio* has been given at least three times, and with marked success. *Martha* and the *Czar und Zimmermann* have drawn excellent houses. The Academy will now be closed until the Autumn campaign of Maretzek. They are to have English opera at one of the theatres, next week,—a troupe from New Orleans.

Mme. DE LAGRANGE has been giving farewell concerts in New York, before leaving for Europe. Has she no farewells for Boston?.....Madame LORINI, née Virginia Whiting, a Boston girl, made her debut at the Teatro Pazyliano, in Florence, on the 8th of May, with great success. She sang Lucia, with MIRATE.

Musical Intelligence.

London.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.—Mlle. Balfé's triumphant début in the *Sonnambula*, was followed by Verdi's *Traviata*; after which *La Sonnambula* was repeated with new triumphs for the young English prima donna. The next night offered Verdi's *Traviata* in place of Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Ronconi being ill. Mlle. Balfé's next part was to be Rosina, in *Il Barbiere*.

M. CHARLES HALLE gave the first of three performances of classical piano music on the 8th, at Dudley Gallery.

"The selection was extremely interesting, not only on account of the sterling merit of the pieces of which it was composed, but because of the very rare occasions on which any of them can be heard in public. Two Sonatas of Beethoven—in G, op. 29, and in E, op. 109—Dussek's in A flat, op. 71, and some movements from one of the *Suites Anglaises* (in G minor) by John Sebastian Bach, together with smaller pieces by M. Stephen Heller and Chopin, made up the programme, which was in all respects worthy the reputation M. Halle has long enjoyed as a most accomplished professor, whose legitimate taste leads him to dedicate his talent exclusively to the highest order of music."

MR. BENEDICT gave on the 10th at Her Majesty's Theatre, the first of three grand concerts, "dramatic, classical and miscellaneous,"—thus dividing his one annual "monster" concert into three more practicable doses. His programme included an overture and a ballad of his own; selections from Rossini, Donizetti and Verdi, sung by Mme. Alboni, Mlle. Piccolomini and Ortolani, Signors Giuglini, Belletti, Beneventano, &c.; Beethoven's *Adelaide*, sung by Giuglini; Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, played by Ernst; Weber's *Concert-stück*, played by Mme. Clara Schumann; Mendelssohn's *Loreley* finale; and the overtures to *Freyshütz* and *Zauberflöte*. Rather a surfeit of good things for one night! At the next, a selection from Gluck's *Orfeo* was promised, with Alboni for the hero.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.—Our last report brought the Opera down to the revival of Verdi's *Nino*, or *Nabucco*, June 2. The sequel was such as one might find by dipping at random into any week of Italian opera in any city,—to wit, a repetition of Verdi's *Trovatore* and of Verdi's *Traviata*. But on the 11th came a refreshing change of air,—a representation of *Don Giovanni*, with closer approximation to the design of the composer and the poet than has been seen for many years. Beneventano was the Don; Piccolomini, Zerlina; and Spezzia, Donna Anna.

THE HANDEL FESTIVAL. (From the Times, June 13.)—Last night the entire choral force, metropolitan and provincial, assembled in Exeter Hall to rehearse the principal choruses from the three oratorios, (*The Messiah*, *Judas Maccabeus* and *Israel in Egypt*), selected for performance at the great Handel commemoration which begins on Monday morning, at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham.

In all about 2,000 choral singers, men and women, were congregated last night in Exeter Hall, for the purpose of rehearsing under the direction of Mr. Costa. Such a choral force was never before assembled in England; and the result of their united efforts was unprecedented. We may confidently as-

sert that nothing on the continent (with all its affected superiority) ever approached it. The flat floor of the hall presented difficulties for the accommodation of so vast a body of singers, not easy to surmount. They were nevertheless surmounted by the indefatigable Mr. Bowley and his assistant, who have labored night and day for the last two months or more to carry out triumphantly the idea of the Handel commemoration. The best practicable plan was adopted. The singers were arranged in double choir, as they will be on the *Israel in Egypt* day, at the Crystal Palace, when the most astounding effect is anticipated from the splendid double choruses in which that masterpiece abounds. The trebles were stationed in the ordinary orchestra; the altos occupied the level space on the floor between the north and south galleries; the tenors commenced at the raised seats; and the basses were situated in the west gallery and the space underneath it. Mr. Costa, the conductor, stood on a raised platform, about the centre of the hall, where he could be visible, in a greater or less degree, to all the singers. The only instruments employed to sustain the chorus were the organ, (Mr. Brownsmith, organist), the gigantic bass-drum, manufactured by Mr. Distin for the Sacred Harmonic Society, (which was in front of the orchestra), a pair of kettle-drums, and four serpents, in the middle of the hall.

Among the many tributes to the fame of Handel which this Festival calls forth, is an exceedingly cheap edition of the "Messiah," issued by Messrs. Cocks & Co. The oratorio complete, with piano-forte score, is sold for one shilling and four pence! When the "Messiah" was produced in Dublin, in 1741, the ladies were respectfully requested to attend the performance without their hoops; a writer in the *Athenæum* suggests the propriety of the same self-denial at Sydenham on the 15th and following days.

We glean the following items from the *Athenæum* of the 6th:

It is long since we have enjoyed a greater musical pleasure than a hearing of the French version of Mozart's "Schauspiel Director," at the St. James's Theatre, the other evening, afforded us. For the most part, "the unconsidered trifles" flung out hastily by those who have been fertile in producing great works are best left unclaimed. Even Mozart could not always command the fairy gift of "speaking pearls and diamonds" whenever he opened his mouth; as his "Masses" attest,—many pages of which are merely so much commonplace, not worth claiming for him who wrote the "Confutatis," the "Ave Verum," and the "Motets." We own, therefore, to have been surprised by the excessive grace, freshness and stamens of the music of this *opéra*, which, we believe, was neglected and the music dispersed in Germany till the happy idea possessed M. Offenbach of collecting it and bringing the work forward, with French text adapted by MM. Halévy and Battu. From first to last, it is charming, and may be ranked with the first act of its composer's "Cosi fan tutte." Two trios in particular may be cited, as blending Art and Nature as only a Mozart could do. The French authors have contrived to arrange a very digestible little farce for the four characters, which are gaily acted; and the music belonging to them honestly sung, and delicately accompanied by the orchestra. It will not surprise us if "L'Impresario" should become more popular in London than it has been in Paris.

Where such Londoners as desire a little silence are to hide themselves next week it seems hard to point out....M. Jullien is announcing a ten days' festival at the Surrey Gardens, beginning on Friday next, to amuse such of the public as have not had sound enough at Sydenham. He undertakes to give the "Creation" and the "Seasons" and Signor Rossini's "Stabat," and the "Messiah,"—and a Rossini Festival, and a Verdi Festival, and a Beethoven Festival, and a Mozart Festival,—and for these he has engaged (to quote from his programme), a "great" soprano, "an accomplished *ditto*," a popular English "*ditto*," "a new celebrated" *ditto*, &c., &c., &c., with all manner of solo players, and other delightful and attractive personages. Now, considering what the musical engagements for the coming fortnight are, we submit that it is a bold measure to speak of the amount of music advertised, on the scale pointed out, being executed otherwise than in a state of massacre. Or are the orchestral players and the solo singers to dispense with sleep, in order that London is to be deprived of silence during these June days?

Mendelssohn's *Lauda Sion* and Rossini's *Stabat Mater* were given before a crowded audience, on the 10th, at St. Martin's Hall, by Mr. Hullah and his First Upper Singing School; being the eighth and last of a series of subscription concerts.

Classical Chamber Concerts, chiefly of piano-forte music, abound as usual in London. Among the different series recently in progress were those of Mrs. John Macfarren, of Mme. Endersohn, of Messrs. Blagrove and Thomas, and Mr. Walter Macfarren, of Mr. W. G. Cousins, of Herr Louis Ries, Mr. Kiallmark, &c.

ITALY.—The *Athenæum* gives the operatic plans of the campaign at Naples for the coming season. At San Carlo 28 representations will be given, commencing May 20th, and one new opera will be produced. At Il Fondo sixty performances will be given ere the season closes, Sept. 6, and two new operas produced, one by Gioia, called *Girella*, the other by Serviano, a novice in opera writing, called *Pergolesi*. The same artists are engaged at both theatres, Viola and Fioretti being prime donne, Prudenza and Pardini prime tenori, Colini the baritone, Arite the basso, and Salvetti the buffo.—The same journal adds:

"In a recent letter," says our Neapolitan Correspondent, "I spoke of our new prima donna, Signora Fioretti, from whom much was expected. On Thursday, 'I Puritani' was performed at San Carlo. Her singing is admitted to be full of grace, of flexibility, and spontaneity—her voice is limpid, fresh, and of a wide range."—The writer of the above welcome tidings, enters largely into the general decay of music in Naples. How complete this is the Londoner may gather even more clearly from the extract from an epistle of another friend in Italy, competent to speak, who writes about the music in Florence, after having wintered further south. Fancy his describing Signora Beltramelli (Mlle. Bertrandi that was) and Signora Lorini (the American lady who appeared last year at our Surrey Opera) as "a Pasta and a Malibran, in comparison with *La Viola*," the last winter's prima donna in Naples!—Our Florentine letter speaks in less qualifying phrase of Signor Cresci, a baritone, and Signor Mirate, a tenore robusto, dwelling on the latter particularly as a magnificent-looking man, with a fine voice and a good method.

PARIS.—There is a letter in this week's *Gazette Musicale*, signed by M. La Fage—to whom, and to the journal we leave the responsibility—which will be little less provocative to the world of musicians. Let us, however, at once say that we will not believe, till our own ears have heard it, that Signor Rossini has absolutely broken silence! This is said to be the case, "believe it who list," and the breach is described as amounting to six Songs, for a mezzo-soprano voice, which are shortly to be published for a charity,—also a new composition for the horn, beguiled out of the dead composer by M. Vivier. Every musician or lover of music, let him write ever so incredulously of such a tale, may be excused if he feels a tingling of hope that it may prove true. Meanwhile—whether on the principle of the man and wife in the children's weather-houses, who may guess?—M. Meyerbeer is understood to be in a state of dudgeon with his subjects in Paris, and to have vanished thence.

M. Battaille, one of the most consummate artists of his time, is about to leave the Opera Comique. A one-act trifle, "La Clef des Champs," with music by M. Deffès, having Mme. Du Barry for heroine of its story, has just been produced at the same theatre.—At the annual meeting of the *Orphéon*, or gathering of the popular singing-classes held the other day, a popular novelty seems to have been a setting, by M. Gounod, the Director, of La Fontaine's fable, "La Cigale et la Fourmi." "He has written," says the *Gazette Musicale*, "a little musical comedy, as pleasant as the poetical one; arranged his chorus dialogue-wise, and made it be surprised, mock itself, laugh and moralize, in the most natural, and consequently most original fashion possible."

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